

VIII.—LOCAL MOVEMENTS OF THE PAINTED PARTRIDGE
FRANCOLINUS PICTUS—AROUND BOMBAY.

In the April issue of *Journal* Mr. Humayun Abdulali has asked for notes from other shikaris regarding the scarcity nowadays, of the Painted Partridge around Bombay District. I agree with Mr. Hayes' remarks for in many days spent after this bird in the last three seasons I have found him much more elusive than when I was last shooting in Bombay in 1928, and my best bag has been three couples. However, I have noticed they are obtainable in the bazaar up to the month of May and it would appear that the 'paraphernalia' which Mr. Hayes bumped into around Kardi may after all be the cause of the scarcity of birds.

I would also mention that when I visited a bungalow about a fortnight ago I had the painful experience of seeing 14 partridges in an old fowl house and was told they were being fattened up. There had been 22 and they came in baskets from a district not far away and this in the month of June!!!

HORNBY ROAD, BOMBAY,

F. C. D. OGDEN.

June 25, 1943.

IX.—BANDING OF LESSER FLORICAN (*SYPHEOTIDES
INDICA*) IN BHAVANAGAR STATE, KATHIAWAR.

Although many ornithologists have written a considerable amount about the habits and distribution of the Lesser Florican (*Sypheotides indica*) there is still much more to be learnt about this little bustard, such as, the migration routes and where it goes after leaving its breeding areas. We know that the florican does not go beyond Indian limits and yet we do not know precisely when and where it spreads out, and which route it takes.

With His Highness the Maharajasahib's eager wish to study migration and subsequent factors concerning the lesser florican, I had had the opinion of Mr. S. H. Prater, Curator of the Bombay Natural History Society on this scheme. He promptly agreed to the suggestion and furnished me with rings and data in order to band florican.

Banding or ringing is the scientific method of studying bird migration, age of birds and also habits. This is a hobby which naturalists and sportsmen should undertake and it is my earnest appeal to those who regularly shoot this game bird 'out of season' to make a study of them so that we may obtain adequate data to enable us to learn local migration routes in different parts of the country.

I have so far had the pleasure of banding 100 florican this season with copper rings having a code number B. F. 1 onwards. I shall therefore be glad if any member who may from now on shoot or

trap any of these ringed birds will kindly inform me, or the Curator, Bombay Natural History Society. Next year I have a plan to band many more birds with aluminium rings bearing the inscription 'INFORM MAHARAJA BHAVANAGAR B.H.F. 1' onwards. Moreover, I keep a detailed account of each bird banded in a proper Register. I do hope others by seeing what we are doing will take interest and commence banding this interesting bird instead of mercilessly destroying it during the breeding season (May to October). I wish to quote E. C. Stuart Baker who states in *Fauna of British India, Birds*, Vol. vi, page 71 :—'This is one of the Indian Game-birds which requires most rigid protection, as it is constantly shot and harassed during the breeding-season'.

I am grateful to Mr. Prater for having supplied me with the necessary aluminium rings and instructions for banding in the correct way.

BHAVANAGAR,

K. S. DHARMAKUMAR SINHJI.

September 4, 1943.

X.—WHIMBREL AND FIDDLER CRABS.

We were watching a flock of whimbrel (Elephanta Island, Bombay Harbour, 10 Jan. 1943) on a mangrove-bordered mud-shore, swarming with fiddler-crabs (*Gelasimus* sp.) of all sizes.

The bird caught the crab by its 'fiddle', lifted it up into the air and then sharply jerked its head. The fiddle broke off, and the whimbrel then methodically dropped the fiddle, picked up the owner and swallowed him! The place was littered with inedible claws. The size and shape of the whimbrel's beak also appeared to help it to extract the crabs from their holes.

The ease with which the crustacean discards its claws and limbs is often quoted as an adaptive device to help it to escape. In this case the crab is hoisted on its own petard!

FRENCH BRIDGE, BOMBAY 7,

M. R. RAUT.

September 15, 1943.

XI.—THE MOULTING OF DUCK AFTER ARRIVAL IN INDIA.

In *J.B.N.H.S.* xlii, p. 444, Mr. Salim Ali has referred to common teal and shoveller being rendered completely flightless due to moult, at Bharatpur, during October.

In X'mas 1933, I was shooting at an irrigation lake in the Nasik District. The quality of the shooting and the scarcity of guns over the huge area resulted in pot shots being taken at young spotbill in the 'flapper' stage. My notes record that a female wigeon, similarly obtained was moulting primaries on both wings and unable to fly. I have shot at the same place (but not before